

Supervising Trainees with Disabilities

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Traditional Models of Disability

- Past definitions of disability have been very narrow and largely medical modeled.
- Orientation towards a deviance perspective.
- People with disabilities are often characterized solely in terms of physical, sensory, or mental differences.
- Disability is seen as a punishment inflicted upon an individual or family by an external force

The Americans with Disabilities Act

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) gives federal civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, State and local government services, and telecommunications.

Otherwise Qualified

- No otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall, solely by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subjected to discrimination by any such entity.

Otherwise Qualified

- A person must be able to meet the essential technical and academic standards established by the school, program, or activity in order to be considered otherwise qualified.

Otherwise Qualified

- A qualified individual with a disability is one who meets the skill, experience, education, and other task-related requirements of a position held or desired and who, with or without *reasonable accommodation*, can perform the essential functions of a job.

Reasonable Accommodations

Defined as any change, in the work environment [or institutional setting] or in the way things are customarily done that enables an individual with a disability to enjoy equal opportunities.

- Modifications to rules, policies or practices
- Removal of architectural, communication or transportation barriers
- Provision of auxiliary aids and services

Student Obligations

- Self identify that he or she has a disability
- Indicate the need for accommodation
- Provide appropriate documentation at the student's expense to establish the existence of the disability and the need for accommodation

Student Obligations

- With or without reasonable accommodation, a student must be able to perform essential functions, fundamental duties of the position, and be able to meet the requirements outlined by the program.

Institutional Obligations

- Provide reasonable accommodations for the student's known disabilities
- Afford student equal opportunity to participate in programs, activities and services (including extracurricular activities)
- *Please ...* do not discriminate based on disability
- Provide auxiliary aids and services

Reasonable Accommodations

- Accommodations are chosen based upon:
 - Specific nature of the person's functional impairment
 - The environment in which the person will be functioning
- Reasonable accommodations are task specific, and there should be a demonstrated match between disability and task demands

Reasonable Accommodations

- Accommodations should not have as their goal a guarantee of success in a particular program or endeavor

Issues related to Interviewing

- Questions are prohibited regarding:
 - The existence, nature, or severity of disability
 - Condition causing disability
 - Prognosis and treatment

Issues related to Interviewing

- Questions are prohibited regarding:
 - Can you stand? Can you walk? *
 - whether the applicant will need reasonable accommodations, and if so, what is the cost?

Financial Issues

Things to Consider:

- Work with your institution in assuring that institutional monies – not only your department funds – will cover costs
- Work with other departments to secure funding
- Consult with the disability services office on campus

Financial Issues

Things to Consider:

- Consider hiring a full time interpreter versus paying per hour
- Contact vocational rehabilitation services or other community resources

Major Attitudinal Barriers

- Backlash
- Denial
- Fear
- Hero Worship/Sensationalizing
- Ignorance
- Pity
- Spread Effect
- Stereotypes

Removing Barriers

Reconceptualizing Disability

- Social model of disability - the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others, due to physical or social barriers.

Removing Barriers

- Maintain an environment that is welcoming and encouraging
- Maintain high expectations
- Consult with students with disabilities
- Allow into your classroom or training site adaptive devices and services

Removing Barriers

- Identify the essential competencies of your program and make this information available
- Provide opportunities for people with and without disabilities to interact

Concluding Remarks

Interesting Stats

The most common disabilities identified by graduate students

- Depression 30.7%
- Orthopedic or mobility impairment 20.6%
- Attention deficit disorder (ADD) 11.8%

Source: National Center for Education Statistics 07-08

- Students with disabilities enrolled full time in Doctoral Psychology programs: 0.9%
- Students with disabilities enrolled full time in Masters in Psychology programs: 0.8%

Source: 2011 Graduate Study in Psychology. Compiled by APA Center for Workforce Studies.